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Montana. Office of
Register of State
Lands
Annual report of
the Register of
State Lands of the
state of Montana

STATE DOCUMENTS

JUN 1977

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Register of the State Land Office

OF THE

STATE OF MONTANA

TO HIS EXCELLENCY,

ROBERT B. SMITH,

GOVERNOR OF MONTANA.

DECEMBER 1, 1898.

H. D. MOORE,

REGISTER.

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FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT.

State of Montana,
Office of Register of State Lands,
Helena, Montana, December 1st, 1898.

To His Excellency, Robert B. Smith, Governor of Montana:

Sir:—In accordance with the provisions of Section 3592 of the Political Code, I submit the following report of the business of the State Land Department for the fiscal year ending November 30th, 1898; also a statement in condensed form showing the amount of sales and leases for the benefit of the various funds during year ending November 30th, 1897, together with a table showing present status of the several land grants under the charge of this office. The matter contained in said table will be found in extended form, by counties, in the report of the State Board of Land Commissioners.

The Register is gratified in being able to report the great increase of the business of this department, particularly in the number of new leases, for, while the lands sold have brought good prices, it seems better for the State to lease the lands and thus derive a permanent benefit therefrom, besides getting the benefit of a constant increase in the value of the land. During the past two years, 971 Leases and Permits covering 402,952 acres, yielding an annual rental of \$78,662.83, have been issued as against 527 leases and permits covering 175,558 acres, yielding \$27,469 annual rental, this being the total number issued for the six preceding years.

The cash receipts of this office for the past two years show an increase of about 300 per cent over any like period in the past history of this Department.

A large amount of first class grazing lands have been selected during the past year all which have been promptly leased by responsible parties at the rate of \$80.00 per section.

If the present policy of the State is continued a further increase may be expected, and, had it prevailed since the organization of the State, over a quarter of a million dollars more would have been paid into the several funds.

The following tables contain a detailed statement of the business of this office for the fiscal year just closed.

TABLE NO. I.
Showing Acreage Selected, Appraised and Classified; also Amount and Value of Saw Timber.

Fund.	Acreage Selected	Acreage Appraised	Appraised Value	Acreage Grazing	Acreage Agri- cultural	Acreage Timber.	No. M feet Saw Timber	Value at \$2.00 per M.	Balance to be Selected.
School	1,583,766	1,472,166	\$2,178,715	1,334,531	65,123	71,604	179,966	\$359,812	54,730
Public Buildings	144,402	134,567	267,672	55,600	1,080	74,827	203,670	407,340	37,597
Agricultural College	122,402	115,709	161,034	73,014	1,000	45,315	126,692	253,024	17,597
School of Mines	758,893	71,801	82,154	41,646	1,501	29,204	117,580	235,160	24,136
Normal School	93,367	92,700	104,750	57,832	830	34,047	91,625	182,050	6,632
University	46,080	46,080	142,000	31,217	12,286	1,587	8,350	16,700	
Reform School	42,777	38,552	53,800	29,933	320	8,968	29,350	58,700	7,223
Deaf and Dumb Asylum	50,000	48,306	65,242	29,782		18,525	17,130	94,200	
Totals	2,415,657	2,016,071	\$2,995,973	1,653,045	82,149	283,767	803,973	\$1,607,946	147,915

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

TABLE NO. 2.

Showing the amounts received from Sales, Leases, Permits, etc., for the year
Ending Nov. 30th, 1898.

Land sales.....	\$ 12,954.69
Timber sales.....	15,123.96
Leases and permits.....	66,947.85
Trespasses, prepaid and back rentals, interest on deferred payments	31,807.21
Total.....	\$126,833.71

Gross receipts for the year 1896.....\$ 41,558.52

Gross receipts for the year 1897.....102,886.53

Gross receipts for the year 1898.....126,833.71

Total amount received from Sales Rentals, Trespasses, Interest, and Back
Rentals for the various funds for the years:

	1896.	1897.	1898.
Permanent School Fund.....	\$ 8,015.18	\$ 27,902.92	\$ 37,739.98
School Income Fund.....	5,565.43	39,300.50	52,585.22
Permanent University.....	3,373.29	13,430.37	4,727.90
University Bond.....	5,565.43	9,262.19	8,804.55
State Capitol Building.....	1,771.06	2,045.09	3,088.72
School of Mines.....	30.00	324.00	2,147.48
Normal School.....	816.00	1,710.50	6,342.46
Agricultural College.....		617.50	5,549.50
Reform School.....		7,436.06	3,044.00
Deaf and Dumb Asylum.....		857.00	2,403.90
Total.....	\$41,558.52	\$102,886.53	\$126,833.71

Note:—The figures for 1896 are inserted for the purpose of showing increase of business of this office.

TABLE NO. 3.

Showing the total amount of sales of State Lands since admitted.

Grant	Acres	Selling Price	Price Per Acre
School Land.....	11,228.82	\$138,628.65	\$12.34
University Land.....	3,030.13	35,872.40	11.90
Public Buildings.....	681.98	7,459.80	11.01
Reform School.....	960.00	9,600.00	10.00
Normal School.....	240.00	2,720.00	11.33
Total.....	16,140.93	\$194,279.85	\$12.03

CITY LOTS.

Missoula School Addition.....	157 lots	\$ 15,813.09
Aldrige School Addition.....	17 lots	283.50
Virginia City (School).....	2 lots	100.00
Total.....		\$210,476.44

	Acres	Amount
Total sales 1897.....	6,060.89	\$66,960.00
Total sales 1898.....	1,816.06	19,032.00

TABLE NO. 4

Showing the sales of Lands and Timber for the year ending November 30, 1898.

SCHOOL LANDS.

County	Acres	Selling Price
Broadwater.....	209.00	\$ 2,090.00
Cascade.....	160.00	1,600.00
Custer	.89	13.00
Deer Lodge.....	320.00	3,520.00
Gallatin.....	82.00	820.00
Granite.....	.77	25.00
Jefferson.....	320.00	3,250.00
Lewis & Clarke.....	160.00	2,080.00
Missoula.....	221.10	2,211.00
Yellowstone.....	344.30	3,443.00
Aldrige, 17 lots.....		283.50
Missoula, 12 lots.....		840.00
Timber sales in Missoula County.....		15,123.96
Total Sales.....	1,818.06	\$35,279.46

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Flathead... ..	40.00	\$400.00
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NORMAL SCHOOL.

Gallatin.....	160.00	\$1,920.00
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UNIVERSITY.

Flathead.....	160.00	\$1,600.00
Grand Totals.....	2,178.06	\$24,075.50

TABLE NO. 5.

Showing the amount of Land Sales for the year ending November 30, 1897.

	Acres	Purchase Price	Rate per Acre
School Lands.....	3,110.76	\$31,887.60	\$10.25
University Lands... ..	2,870.13	34,272.40	11.96
Normal School Lands.....	80.00	800.00	10.00
Totals.....	6,060.89	\$66,960.00	\$11.04

TABLE NO. 6.

Showing the amount of School Lands under Lease for the year ending Nov.
30, 1898.

County.	Acres Leased.	Rentals
Beaverhead.....	18,080.00	\$ 2,019.00
Broadwater.....	4,536.23	686.92
Carbon.....	3,130.00	859.85
Cascade.....	52,225.64	6,191.20
Choteau.....	36,583.65	3,795.93
Custer.....	6,321.09	709.15
Dawson.....	4,744.10	635.15
Deer Lodge.....	10,500.00	1,357.35
Fergus.....	75,426.00	6,674.46
Flathead.....	3,605.13	907.00
Gallatin.....	17,320.00	3,167.75
Granite.....	3,680.00	503.00
Jefferson.....	3,000.00	297.00
Lewis and Clarke.....	17,879.99	1,903.61
Madison.....	13,520.00	1,093.00
Meagher.....	48,920.00	5,032.00
Missoula.....	3,645.00	632.45
Park.....	8,920.00	865.50
Ravalli.....	1,694.95	466.00
Silver Bow.....	320.00	100.00
Sweet Grass.....	23,573.02	2,593.64
Teton.....	20,163.33	2,532.65
Valley.....	3,520.00	234.80
Yellowstone.....	20,445.74	2,114.75
Totals.....	404,779.07	\$45,372.16

	Acres	An. Rental
Acreage Leased Fiscal Year 1898.....	133,083	\$13,755.42
Acreage Leased Fiscal Year 1897.....	112,369	10,297.74
Total am't Leased 6 preceding years.....	159,547	21,319.00

TABLE NO. 7.

Showing the amount of Public Buildings Lands under Lease for the year ending Nov.30, 1898.

County.	Acres Leased	Rentals
Beaverhead.....	6,221.09	\$491.25
Flathead.....	200.00	17.00
Gallatin.....	3,680.00	336.87
Lewis and Clarke.....	5,080.00	652.20
Madison.....	7,330.96	500.25
Ravalli.....	239.62	20.00
Totals.....	22,751.67	\$2,077.57

	Acres	Rentals
Total leased during 1898.....	10,450	\$1,060.67
Total leased during 1897.....	8,701	527.80
Total leased up to 1897.....	3,600	489.00

TABLE NO. 8.

Showing the amount of Agricultural College Lands Leased at close of the year 1898.

County	Acres Leased	Rentals
Beaverhead.....	9,636.30	\$602.00
Choteau.....	1,461.31	182.67
Gallatin.....	480.00	84.00
Lewis and Clarke.....	10,062.74	1,325.28
Meagher.....	12,402.31	1,651.59
Missoula.....	116.30	30.00
Sweet Grass.....	1,280.00	160.00
Teton.....	240.00	30.00
Totals.....	35,676.96	\$4,068.54

	Acres	Rentals
Amount Leased during 1898.....	26,236	\$3,471.04
Amount Leased during 1897.....	9,440	617.50

None leased prior to 1897.

TABLE NO. 9.

Showing the total amount of School of Mines Lands under lease at close of the year, 1898.

County.	Acres Leased	Rentals
Beaverhead.....	840.00	\$ 54.00
Cascade.....	5,240.00	603.12
Choteau.....	4,747.95	445.06
Flatehead.....	320.00	68.00
Gallatin.....	1,340.00	130.50
Lewis and Clarke.....	3,083.53	337.26
Teton.....	2,720.26	204.96
Totals.....	18,290.74	\$1,842.90

	Acres	Rentals
Amount Leased during 1898.....	14,527	\$1,809.00
Amount Leased during 1897.....	3,603	300.00
Amount Leased during 1896.....	160	30.00

TABLE NO. 10

Showing the amount of Normal School Lands under lease for the year 1898.

County	Acres Leased	Rentals
Beaverhead.....	14,673.57	\$1,563.55
Cascade.....	2,078.75	179.00
Choteau.....	8,026.32	805.00
Gallatin.....	2,640.00	597.00
Lewis and Clarke.....	2,292.14	285.00
Teton.....	920.00	115.00
Totals.....	30,630.78	\$3,544.55

	Acres	Rentals
Amount Leased during 1898.....	23,392	\$2,376.55
Amount Leased during 1897.....	5,858	372.00

TABLE NO. 11.

Showing the amount of University Lands under lease at the close of 1898.

County	Acres Leased	Rentals
Broadwater.....	320.00	\$40.00
Cascade.....	757.92	227.00
Custer.....	320.00	25.00
Deer Lodge.....	313.87	100.00
Fergus.....	12,320.00	1,036.50
Flathead.....	5,760.00	1,643.70
Gallatin.....	1,640.00	263.00
Granite.....	240.00	52.50
Madison.....	3,280.00	230.00
Meagher.....	3,840.00	414.00
Missoula.....	160.00	20.00
Yellowstone.....	1,025.60	102.75
Totals.....	29,977.39	\$4,154.45

	Acres	Rental
University lands leased during 1898.....	11,826	\$1,339.55
University lands leased during 1897.....	5,740	2,624.10

TABLE NO. 12.

Showing the amount of Reform School lands under lease at close of year 1898

County	Acres Leased	Rentals
Fergus.....	1,275.61	\$100.00
Madison.....	480.00	30.50
Meagher.....	10,084.30	1,260.50
Totals.....	11,839.91	1,390.50

	Acres	Rental
Am't Reform School lands leased in 1898..	11,360	\$1,348.00
Am't Reform School lands leased in 1897..	480	42.50

None leased prior to 1897.

TABLE NO 13.

Showing the amount of Deaf and Dumb Asylum Lands under Lease at close of the year 1898.

County	Acres Leased.	Rentals
Beaverhead.....	6,840.00	\$446.85
Gallatin.....	1,920.00	150.00
Lewis and Clarke.....	1,800.00	196.85
Madison.....	1,000.00	77.00
Meagher.....	12,964.09	1,549.83
Totals.....	24,564.09	\$2,420.53

	Acres	Rental
D. and D. Asylum lands leased during 1898	15,664	\$1,813.53
D. and D. Asylum lands leased during 1897	8,900	607.00

No lands leased prior to 1897.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Having made the matter of handling the lands held in trust by the State the subject of careful study during the past two years, with a view to an increase of the revenues derived therefrom, and a full development of the resources of the schools and institutions dependent thereon, I feel it my duty to make the following recommendations which may properly be acted upon by the Board of Land Commissioners.

First:--

I recommend that all school and university lands be withdrawn from sale, this being in line with the message of the Governor to the Fifth Legislative Assembly; not only for the reasons given in said message, but also because it is more to the interest of the schools to receive an annual income from the leasing of said lands, than to sell them and trust to opportunities arising for the favorable investment of the funds derived from their sale, with the practical result of a large part of the funds lying idle and producing no income whatever. If they are not sold, but leased, they will constantly increase in value. Had Illinois, for example, retained its school lands, instead of selling them for a low price in the early days, the present revenue would exceed the cost of maintaining its schools. Montana should profit by the experience of the older States. I am informed by the Commissioner of Public Lands of the State of Washington, that they have withdrawn their school lands from sale, and I respectfully urge, that we do the same.

Second:--

I recommend that every effort be made to increase the acreage leased, and, with that end in view make the following suggestion:

The law requires that the State lands be appraised every five years, but gives the Board of Land Commissioners power to reduce the appraisement ten per cent. in any year. It being far better to lease the lands at a low rental, not only for the revenue so obtained, but also because the lands so leased will be greatly improved in value, I recommend that the appraisal of each unleased tract of land be reduced ten per cent each year until the same is leased, or a new appraisal made. Also, in view of the increased demand for lands, when a public leasing is held, I recommend in this connection that, after two and one-half years shall have elapsed after the lands in any county have been appraised and offered for lease that the lands unleased be again offered for lease to the highest bidder at a public leasing at a reduction of twenty-five per cent from the former appraisal. I believe that the increased revenues would far more than cover the expense of advertising and holding such public leasing.

Third:--

In view of the fact that a large portion of the lands granted to the various institutions have been selected as grazing lands and are of small value, and that, owing to the fact that the agricultural lands have been about all taken up by settlers, it will be necessary to complete the small amount of selections from timber lands which will remain unsold for several years, and from grazing lands which cannot be sold but can be leased, I respectfully suggest that the board by resolution ask our Legislature at its coming session to memorialize the Congress of the United States for an additional grant of 100,000 acres for each of the institutions having grants and also for 100,000 acres for the establishment and maintenance of an insane asylum, and the same amount for a miners' hospital (these grants having been made the

state of Utah), and also the additional grant of sections 2 and 32 in each township for the benefit of the common schools. As these lands would necessarily be grazing in character, it would work no hardship on anyone, would help our institutions in their infancy and be hailed with pleasure by the stockmen, as they would then be able to lease and preserve the range from overcrowding. That it is not asking too much will be conceded after an examination of the Table No. 1, whereby it may be seen that the average value of the lands granted this State is only \$1.47 per acre, whereas the lands granted the other states were easily worth three times that value. I believe that if proper efforts be made, an additional endowment can be secured for the benefit of all parties concerned.

Fourth:—

In view of the amount of office work involved in the transaction of the business and correspondence of this department, I respectfully ask that the allowance of an extra clerk in this office for the past two years be continued on a permanent basis, for the reason that it would be wholly impossible to get along without it."

Respectfully submitted,

H. D. MOORE,

Register State Lands.

